



Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

Monkton Priory CP School

**St Martin's Road
Monkton
Pembroke
Pembrokeshire
SA71 4NG**

Date of inspection: May 2024

by

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

About Monkton Priory CP School

Name of provider	Monkton Priory CP School
Local authority	Pembrokeshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Community Primary
Religious character	Not applicable
Number of pupils on roll	219
Pupils of statutory school age	160
Number in nursery classes	29
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Primary is 23.7%)	47.9%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 13.2%)	48.1%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/04/2016
Start date of inspection	07/05/2024
Around 30% of the school's intake come from the local Gypsy Traveller community.	

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website: mylocalschool.gov.wales

a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Overview

Monkton Priory Community Primary School is a welcoming and inclusive school that has high aspirations for its pupils. Pupils' well-being is at the heart of everything that the school does, and pupils feel safe and know that they will be supported if they have any concerns. Most pupils' behaviour is exemplary. There are warm and trusting relationships between staff and pupils. These build pupils' confidence to develop a wide range of skills and help most pupils to make strong progress in their learning.

Staff have thoughtfully developed a curriculum that celebrates the diversity of the local community and meets the needs of all pupils. Learning experiences are interesting and motivating. There are many valuable opportunities for pupils to make visits in the locality and further afield, to welcome visitors and to gain an insight into the world of work. This means that pupils are engaged in their learning and talk about it with great enthusiasm.

The recent focus on developing pupils' oracy skills has been extremely effective and the work to support pupils to apply their numeracy skills in real-life contexts is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' standards. In general, pupils develop their independent learning skills well, but on occasions learning for younger pupils is too adult led. Staff support pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) extremely successfully. As they move through the school, pupils in the learning resource classes have good opportunities to integrate with other pupils and to play important roles in leadership groups.

Leaders and staff have developed extremely close links with the local community and the school provides a wealth of valuable support to families. There are innovative programmes to involve parents and carers in the life and work of the school and for them to gain qualifications. Lines of communication are open and effective, and this enables staff and parents to work together for the benefit of all pupils.

The headteacher provides strong, inclusive leadership. He values the expertise of all staff and has created a cohesive team who are eager to take on responsibilities and to try new things for the benefit of pupils. The governing body supports the school well. Governors know the staff, pupils and families well and are developing their role in holding the school to account. Despite the school's highly inclusive and caring ethos it does not meet the requirements for recording pupils' attendance.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that the registration of pupils' attendance meets requirements
- R2 Improve the balance between adult-led and child-led activities for younger pupils

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to meeting the needs of a diverse community, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main evaluation

Learning

Most pupils start Nursery with skills in language, mathematical development and physical development well below those expected for their age. Most make good progress as they move through the school. There is no noticeable difference between the progress of those pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers. Most pupils with ALN, including those who attend the learning resource classes, make strong progress towards their individual targets.

Most pupils' speech, language and communication skills progress well as they move through the school, often from low starting points. Nearly all pupils in Nursery and Reception join in enthusiastically with a range of songs and rhymes in English and Welsh. In Year 2, pupils confidently ask a local farmer a range of well thought out questions about his work for their podcast. Older pupils communicate fluently with adults and make good use of subject specific vocabulary, when providing a useful summary of their current topic to visitors.

In Reception, many pupils are beginning to learn initial letter sounds and understand that words have meaning. By Year 2, most pupils recognise an increasing range of words and develop the skills to blend a few sounds to work out new words. A few read fluently taking good account of punctuation. Older pupils develop their reading skills appropriately as they move through the school. By Year 6, most pupils' ability to infer and make deductions about what they read is developing well. Older pupils listen to younger pupils' reading with purpose. They provide useful tips about how to add expression and recap on unfamiliar vocabulary.

Many pupils in Reception are beginning to form letters accurately with the support of an adult. In Year 1, pupils begin to write their own sentences and a minority extend these into longer stories with suitable vocabulary. In Year 2, pupils' writing generally becomes more detailed, and they pay good attention to the use of simple punctuation. Most older pupils understand the features of a range of different genres and demonstrate these when they produce their own writing. For example, Year 4 pupils respond appropriately to a letter from a local councillor about reducing food waste at the school. Although a minority of pupils take a pride in how they present their work, overall, the presentation of pupils' work and the neatness of their handwriting are inconsistent across the school.

Most pupils develop a good understanding of mathematical concepts and apply these to solving problems with increasing effectiveness. Younger pupils begin to use the language of mathematics accurately and learn to count and recognise numbers through activities led by adults. In Year 2, many pupils start to be able to divide numbers by using their knowledge of times tables. Many pupils recall prior learning well. For example, Year 3 pupils use their knowledge of the four rules of number effectively to answer a range of written problems. As they move through the school, pupils co-operate and discuss their mathematical thinking to support each other to solve real-life problems. For example, pupils in Year 6 consider how best to weigh a large mound of discarded clothes when studying the impact of fast fashion on the environment.

Most pupils develop their Welsh language skills appropriately and show enthusiasm for learning and using the language. Younger pupils follow instructions in Welsh and spontaneously ask others if they would like fruit or toast. As they progress through the school, pupils' understanding of the Welsh language develops to include more complex language patterns. For example, when playing a Welsh game about flags and countries, pupils in Year 5 respond to and ask questions about how to play the game in Welsh.

Throughout the school, pupils develop strong digital skills, and they apply these skills to a high standard through all areas of learning. Older pupils create websites to celebrate the work of the Salvation Army and to raise money for the charity by selling items on their website. In Year 5, pupils use a computer simulation effectively to create an animation of an imaginary journey through a human heart. Pupils produce informative podcasts about their current themes that they post on an online music sharing platform for others to listen to. Most pupils have a clear understanding about how to stay safe online.

Over time, most pupils make good progress in improving their physical skills. Many pupils in Nursery begin to pedal and control trikes safely when moving in the outdoor area. In reception and Year 1, pupils show increasing control of their movements as they join in enthusiastically with the early morning movement routines. Most older pupils develop their co-ordination well through the wide range of physical activities on offer during lessons and at playtimes.

As they move through the school, pupils increasingly make the most of the many opportunities for them to be creative in their learning. For example, pupils in Year 1 consider how they can improve the school grounds to attract more minibeasts and older pupils design their own business cards for becoming an estate agent and create colourful artwork inspired by a local artist.

Older pupils develop their independent learning skills well, but younger pupils are at times too reliant on adults for support and direction and do not always have sufficient opportunities to make decisions for themselves.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

The school's focus on and drive to promote pupils' well-being is a significant strength of the school. Most pupils feel safe at school and know that the staff are there to help and support them. Nearly all pupils develop strong and positive working relationships

with staff and trust them to listen to their concerns and support their social and emotional needs.

Most pupils' behaviour is exemplary, and there is a sense of calm throughout the school, including during break times. Pupils treat each other with courtesy and respect and offer a kind, warm welcome to visitors.

Across the school, pupils participate enthusiastically in the wide range of physical activities on offer and understand the contribution that being physically active plays to leading a healthy lifestyle. Older pupils engage well with the school's 'succeeding through sports' programme. Through this, pupils interview local athletes and are developing a good understanding of sporting values and habits, such as fair play and eating a healthy diet. Most pupils have a clear understanding of what makes up a healthy diet. Through their studies, they learn about local farming and food production and work well with outside industries and agencies to promote good health.

Most pupils are eager to learn and show great enthusiasm for their learning. Older pupils take responsibility for their own progress through reflection sessions where they evaluate their learning from the previous week and then set challenging targets for the coming week. They reflect maturely on what went well and what they can do to improve. Most pupils respond positively to oral and written feedback from staff and peers. Older pupils use these strategically to identify what worked well in their work and what would make it even better.

Pupils treat each other with respect and politeness. Most pupils collaborate well to solve problems. Older pupils articulate discussion points very well when debating issues of national importance, such as food waste and fast fashion. During these discussions, they patiently take turns to talk and challenge each other with maturity and sensitivity.

Most pupils are eager to take on leadership roles, such as school ambassadors, school councillors, digital leaders and member of the eco committee and Criw Cymraeg. They take their roles seriously, with a sense of pride, and play an important role in school leadership. Pupils support leaders to consider the school's priorities from their perspective and to complete termly safety and accessibility audits with governors. Nearly all pupils feel that staff listen to their views and consider them when making decisions. For example, when school council members expressed concerns regarding the school fence and entry system, these were quickly repaired and improved, giving the children a greater sense of the importance of their roles.

Many pupils participate in the school's extracurricular activities such as Bible Club, football club and netball club and are keen to tend to the school vegetable garden. Older pupils compete in performing arts stage events in the local Urdd Eisteddfod where they have an opportunity to demonstrate their Welsh language, performance and musical skills.

Most pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of caring for their local and wider community. Older pupils demonstrate how they are becoming ethically informed citizens through considering a wide range of important environmental issues. For example, to support the homeless, they research, gather and present

data about the daytime temperatures of the local town centre. They also evaluate the impact of global food waste on the environment. Many pupils are enterprising and creative. For example, older pupils use a basic coding device to create digital shop window signs for the local Salvation Army store and develop an interactive website for the shop to promote and sell second-hand clothing.

Pupils' attendance has improved over the past two years, but it has not returned to pre pandemic levels. Pupils' attendance on a Friday is generally around five percentage points lower than it is for the rest of the week.

Teaching and learning experiences

The school provides a wide range of stimulating and exciting learning experiences. These engage learners well and support them in making good progress across the school. Leaders place a strong emphasis on creating an inclusive curriculum that meets the needs of all learners successfully, including those who attend the learning resource classes. There are purposeful opportunities to integrate pupils who attend these classes into the life and work of the school, especially for older pupils who regularly participate in mainstream sessions.

The Curriculum for Wales is embedded well across the school and learning experiences are broad and relevant to the school and wider community. Staff plan three whole-school themes each year. Pupils have suitable input into what and how they learn by suggesting ideas within these broader themes. Teachers ensure that there is good progression across the curriculum and that the aspects of themes that pupils study are appropriate to their age or stage of development. This ensures that pupils are motivated to learn, and that the curriculum builds systematically on pupils' skills, knowledge, and experiences. There is a focus on providing real-life learning experiences that pupils can relate to and that deal with current issues that affect the local and wider community. For example, pupils are currently looking at ways in which the whole school can be better at recycling to meet the new requirements for sorting waste.

The curriculum serves the wide range of varied groups that make up the local community well and ensures that diversity is celebrated within the school. There are valuable opportunities for pupils to learn about the cultures of others, including the local Gypsy Traveller community. Parents and pupils value these opportunities, and they contribute well to the school's inclusive ethos. Teachers make very good use of visits to the locality and beyond to influence pupils' sense of belonging to their local community, as well as wider Wales. The curriculum also reflects the wide diversity of Wales through a study of famous Welsh people, including Shirley Bassey, Betty Campbell and Eddie Parris.

Strong links with local businesses provide pupils with a range of experiences to inspire them about careers and the possibilities that they have for the future, and to develop their understanding of the world of work effectively. For example, pupils met with a local estate agent to find out what their work entailed and the impact of local house prices on the ability to own your own home. The estate agent explained to pupils about mortgages and budgeting as part of this project.

The school benefits from extensive grounds. They are well developed and provide many worthwhile opportunities for effective outdoor learning. Recent training in how to use the outdoors for mathematics lessons has increased staff confidence in planning appropriate sessions. For example, Year 6 calculate how much paint will be needed to decorate outdoor spaces. Provision for developing pupils' mathematical skills across the school is effective. The use of practical apparatus and the recent focus on pupils applying their skills in real life contexts is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' standards.

Staff provide good opportunities for pupils to hear and practise their Welsh language skills. Through a focus on the local community and its place in Wales, they develop pupils' understanding of Welsh culture and heritage successfully.

The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills. The focus on developing pupils' oracy skills is beginning to have a positive impact across the school and adults have been trained in how to support pupils to develop their speaking skills. The teaching of reading is planned systematically and there is a structured programme to develop pupils' phonological knowledge. Pupils particularly enjoy the peer reading sessions where older pupils support younger pupils. These help all pupils to develop their own reading skills and contribute to the school's focus on developing a love of reading.

Teachers and teaching assistants have positive working relationships with pupils. They are extremely nurturing and supportive and, overall, give pupils the confidence to have a go at things and to answer questions. Learning proceeds at a good pace and keeps pupils engaged. Teachers use questioning well to take learning forward and to extend pupils' thinking. They generally match activities and tasks appropriately to pupils' ability. On occasions, particularly for younger pupils, adults over-direct learning and limit opportunities for pupils to try things for themselves first.

Teachers provide regular purposeful feedback to pupils about their learning. There are useful opportunities for pupils to respond to this feedback and to identify what they have done well and what they could do to improve their work next time.

Care, support and guidance

The well-being of pupils is a priority and a particular strength of the school. Pupils access a wide range of highly effective support for their personal, social, and emotional skills. Daily check ins for all pupils ensure that pupils have time to talk about any issues they may have, and pupils know who to talk to if they need support.

Staff know their pupils very well and develop strong, trusting relationships with them. For example, teachers in the learning resource classes ensure that staff across the school have a secure understanding of the needs of these pupils. This means that these pupils are ably supported at all times. Staff create high-quality person-centred plans for every child in the school and review these at least annually. This information helps to ensure that most pupils engage positively in class and benefit from the many opportunities that the school provides.

The school is a very inclusive environment, and all pupils have full access to all that the school has to offer. Pupils are treated equally and fairly. There are no negative

trends or concerning patterns in the performance of groups of learners, including those from the Gypsy Traveller community and those who are eligible for free school meals when compared to the performance of other pupils.

The ALN co-ordinator collaborates effectively with staff to support pupils with ALN. Staff identify pupils' needs quickly and provide timely, targeted support. They review individual pupils' progress regularly and meet with parents to develop a shared understanding of pupils' ongoing needs. Teaching assistants run well-planned, focused intervention programmes. They work skilfully with pupils to narrow gaps in their learning and to boost their confidence. The school engages well with specialist services to access relevant guidance and support that helps most pupils with ALN to make effective progress towards their targets.

Staff evaluate pupils' progress against their targets well to support them to make progress in their skills over time. Teachers encourage older pupils to consider their learning attributes and pupils make mature use of weekly reflection time to evaluate their progress and set targets for themselves.

Leaders have robust procedures to monitor attendance. They positively encourage good attendance, for example through celebration assemblies and strong communication with parents and carers about the importance of good attendance. As a result, pupils' overall attendance is improving.

Arrangements to safeguard pupils are generally robust and effective. However, the way the school registers pupils' attendance does not meet requirements as pupils are only registered for nine rather than ten sessions each week. This means that the school cannot make meaningful comparisons about the attendance of individual and groups of pupils.

Pupils' moral, social and cultural skills are well developed. For example, when studying the Old Testament, pupils in Year 6 express honest and mature opinions of what they believe. The school has strong links with the local Church and pupils visit regularly to participate in religious festivals and events. Staff organise valuable opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of their identity, heritage and culture and to compare these with other cultures. For example, as part of a wider programme, school leaders ensure that there is an opportunity for pupils to find out about the culture and traditions of the local Gypsy Traveller community. As a result, nearly all pupils reflect on their own values and beliefs and challenge stereotypes.

Leaders ensure that all pupils have access to offsite educational experiences to engage with businesses, places of historical interest and places of worship. For example, pupils participate in the 'Succeeding through Sport' initiative and have enjoyed their visits to a cross fit business, a denim factory, a local charity shop, as well as working with a local farmer and attending residential visits to Cardiff.

Teachers have developed a rich and diverse curriculum, which has ensured that the pupils are having a positive impact on the local environment and the wider world. Thorough planning and great thought during the process of curriculum development have ensured that community engagement is a significant strength of the school. There are innovative programmes to involve parents and carers in the life and work of the school and for them to gain qualifications. For example, the school's 'Launch'

project has enabled groups of parents to access work following accredited training at the school.

Teachers provide pupils with meaningful opportunities to take on leadership roles. Most pupils feel that their ideas are listened to, and that they contribute effectively to school life. Members of the pupil-led groups collaborate well on priority areas within the school.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides clear strategic direction for school improvement. He is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and, together, they ensure that everyone connected with the school has high expectations for what pupils learn and achieve.

The headteacher has created a caring environment that is inclusive, nurturing and respectful. He works closely with all staff to ensure that the well-being of pupils and staff is at the heart of the school's work. He has developed excellent working relationships with families and the wider community, and this helps to place the school at its centre. Lines of communication are open and effective, and this has a positive impact on the way that the school and parents working together for the benefit of all pupils.

Senior leaders involve staff in a range of effective self-evaluation activities, and the priorities they identify reflect the needs of the school accurately. The headteacher has a good understanding of individual staff expertise and uses this information to deploy staff to lead areas of development successfully. He has created a team of leaders at all levels who model professional values and behaviour and take responsibility for improving important aspects of the school's work. As a result, the school has a strong track record of making and sustaining improvements. For example, the recent initiative to improve standards of speaking and listening through a targeted approach has had a positive impact on raising the standards of oracy across the school.

Leaders review staff performance regularly and set targets for improvement that link to the school's development priorities, including improving the quality of teaching. Regular and robust monitoring identifies areas of good practice and staff have useful opportunities to observe each other in lessons. Staff who are leading on initiatives deliver model lessons for colleagues to observe. All staff have purposeful opportunities to visit other schools in the locality and further afield to see good practice in other settings and to support their subject leadership. Staff have been asked to deliver presentations about the work that they have led, which aids the development of their leadership skills. For example, a middle leader spoke at senior leaders' conference about the effective work on delivering a Welsh programme to younger pupils.

The school addresses local and national priorities well, including additional learning needs reform and curriculum development. Leaders and teachers have worked collaboratively to develop a curriculum that reflects the principles of the Curriculum for Wales and is relevant to the experiences of the pupils. Leaders also ensure that the provision for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills is good and plans are implemented effectively.

The governing body is highly supportive of the school. Governors undertake their roles diligently, such as monitoring the school's finances. They participate in monitoring activities alongside staff, which helps to develop their understanding of the strengths of the school and its areas for development. They know the staff, pupils and families well and are developing their role in holding the school to account. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well. For example, governors ensure that there are appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

Professional learning for staff links effectively to the school's development priorities. Staff compile useful monitoring reports and generate targets for improvement. The use of professional enquiry and research tasks has enhanced their skills and had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

Leaders ensure that the safeguarding culture of the school is strong, and all staff understand their role within the school. Policies and routines are robust, and staff discharge their duties effectively.

The school manages its finances effectively. Leaders and governors ensure that they resource school improvement priorities suitably. This enables the school to maintain and enhance the worthwhile support for vulnerable pupils. The pupil development grant is used effectively to support the additional learning needs and emotional needs of pupils affected by socio-economic disadvantage. For example, staff run a series of bespoke programmes to raise pupils' attainment and well-being and to encourage them to be aspirational for their futures.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' well-being, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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